

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance Cover Sheet

Proposed Action: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) proposes, through a cooperative agreement with Northwest Fuel Development, Incorporated, to provide funds for the construction of a facility to demonstrate an integrated system which would use coal mine waste methane, commonly referred to as "gob gas", for the production of electrical power. The facility would be located at the Parrish Shaft site of the Federal Number 2 Mine near the unincorporated town of Crossroads in western Monongalia County, West Virginia. If approved, DOE would provide approximately 35% (\$600,000) of the funding required for the project.

Type of Statement: Environmental Assessment

Lead Agency: U.S. DOE; National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL)

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Abstract: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) to assess the environmental and human impacts that would result from DOE's participation in a cooperative agreement between DOE and Northwest Fuel Development, Incorporated for the construction and operation of an Integrated Power Generation System for Coal Mine Waste Methane Utilization. DOE's objective in participating in the agreement is to support demonstration of a technology that has the potential to reduce methane emissions from coal mines. Specifically, DOE seeks to provide partial funding (\$600,000 or approximately 35% of the total project cost) to demonstrate the application of a system which would collect "gob gas" (waste methane from the mined out portion of an underground mine following extraction of the coal using longwall mining), upgrade the gas by removing impurities (primarily water, carbon dioxide, and nitrogen), and use the fuel gas in a series of 18 modular gensets (reciprocating internal combustion engines driving electrical generators) to generate electricity for use at the mine. A portion of the gas which meets pipeline quality standards would sold to the local gas distribution company.

The new power generation system would be installed on a site owned by Eastern Associated Coal Corporation located in an unincorporated part of western Monongalia, West Virginia. The environmental analysis identified that the most notable changes to result from the proposed project would occur in the following areas: air emissions, safety

and health of employees, and community noise. No substantive adverse environmental concerns were identified in analyzing these changes.

Public Comments: DOE encourages public participation in the NEPA process. A draft EA was distributed for public review on May 17, 2002, and comments were solicited through the close of the comment period on June 7, 2002. The EA was made available for public access at the City County Public Library in Moundsville, WV and on the NETL website. Newspaper notices announcing the availability of the draft EA were printed in the Moundsville Echo. In addition, availability of the draft EA was announced on the NETL website. Copies of the draft EA were also distributed to cognizant regulatory agencies and to the nearest resident to the proposed site, who had requested information on potential noise from the proposed project during the scoping process. One comment was received from the public. The comment expressed appreciation for the opportunity to review the EA and reaffirmed that noise was the only issue of concern to the commenter. The comment took no exception to the environmental impacts included in the draft EA or the analysis of those impacts. The West Virginia Division of Culture and History provided feedback on the draft EA, and their response is included in Appendix B of this final EA. The comment reiterated the agency's position that no impacts to cultural or historic resources were expected as a result of the proposed DOE action. All comments received from the public participation were considered and addressed in the final Environmental Assessment for the proposed DOE action.